

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A used article quotation method that provides a user computer with a quote for acceptance of a used article from a user, said used article quotation method comprising the steps of:

(a) causing a server computer, which is connected with the user computer in a communicable manner, to receive a quotation request of the used article and quotation requirement information, which is required for quotation of the used article, from the user computer and to determine a trade-in quote for the acceptance of the used article that is a trade-in of the used article with purchase of a product and a cash-out quote for the acceptance of the used article that is a cash-out of the used article without purchase of a product, based on the quotation requirement information; and

(b) causing the server computer to send quotation information, which includes the trade-in quote and the cash-out quote determined in said step (a), to the user computer,

wherein said step (b) causes the server computer to determine whether the cash-out quote, which has been determined based on the quotation requirement information, is in a preset allowable cash-out value range and, when it is determined that the cash-out quote is out of the preset allowable cash-out value range, to send the quotation information including an acceptance of the used article at the trade-in quote and excluding the cash-out quote to the user computer.

Claim 2 (Previously Presented): A used article quotation method in accordance with claim 1, wherein said step (a) causes the server computer to determine the trade-in quote and the cash-out quote in such a manner that the trade-in quote is higher than the cash-out quote.

Claim 3 (Previously Presented): A used article quotation method in accordance with claim 1, wherein said step (a) causes the server computer either to determine first the cash-out quote and then the trade-in quote based on the predetermined cash-out quote in such a manner that the trade-in quote is higher than the cash-out quote, or to determine first the trade-in quote and then the cash-out quote based on the predetermined trade-in quote in such a manner that the trade-in quote is higher than the cash-out quote.

Claim 4 (Original): A used article quotation method in accordance with claim 3, wherein said step (a) causes the server computer either to determine the cash-out quote and compute the trade-in quote as a function of the predetermined cash-out quote, or to determine the trade-in quote and compute the cash-out quote as a function of the predetermined trade-in quote.

Claim 5 (Original): A used article quotation method in accordance with claim 1, wherein said step (a) causes the server computer to set a minimum value and a maximum value of the cash-out quote and a maximum value and a minimum value of the trade-in quote.

Claim 6 (Original): A used article quotation method in accordance with claim 1, wherein said step (b) causes the server computer to send a quotation window, which includes a cash-out option selected by the user to request a cash-out at the cash-out quote and a trade-in option selected by the user to request a trade-in at the trade-in quote, in addition to the cash-out quote and the trade-in quote, as the quotation information to the user computer.

Claim 7 (Original): A used article quotation method in accordance with claim 6, said used article quotation method further comprising the steps of:

(c) in response to receipt of the user's selection of the trade-in option from the user computer after said step (b), causing the server computer to store a trade-in specification, which includes the quotation requirement information and the trade-in quote, into a storage unit; and

(d) in response to receipt of a product purchase request from the user computer, causing the server computer to read the trade-in specification stored in said storage unit, to send the read-out trade-in specification to the user computer, and to ask the user whether to effectuate a trade-in according to the trade-in specification.

Claim 8 (Canceled).

Claim 9 (Original): A used article quotation method in accordance with claim 1, wherein said step (b) causes the server computer to send a quotation window, which includes a cash-out option selected by the user to request a cash-out at the cash-out quote and a trade-in option selected by the user to request a trade-in at the trade-in quote, in addition to the cash-out quote and the trade-in quote, as the quotation information to the user computer and, when the cash-out quote, which has been determined based on the quotation requirement information, is out of a preset allowable cash-out value range, to send either of the quotation window excluding the cash-out option or the quotation window including the cash-out option in a certain state that does not allow for the user's selection, to the user computer.

Claim 10 (Original): A used article quotation method in accordance with claim 1, wherein said step (a) causes the server computer to receive the quotation request of the used article and information regarding a component included in the used article as the quotation requirement information, which is required for quotation of the used article, from the user computer and to determine the trade-in quote and the cash-out quote, based on the information regarding the component included in the used article.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): A used article quotation system that provides a user computer with a quote for acceptance of a used article from a user, said used article quotation system comprising:

a quote determination module that receives a quotation request of the used article and quotation requirement information, which is required for quotation of the used article, from the user computer and determines a trade-in quote for the acceptance of the used article that is a trade-in of the used article with purchase of a product and a cash-out quote for the acceptance of the used article that is a cash-out of the used article without purchase of a product, based on the quotation requirement information; and

a quotation information transmission module that sends quotation information, which includes the trade-in quote and the cash-out quote determined by said quote determination module, to the user computer,

wherein said quotation information transmission module causes said quote determination module to determine whether the cash-out quote, which has been determined based on the quotation requirement information, is in a preset allowable cash-out value range and, when it is determined that the cash-out quote is out of the preset allowable cash-out value range, to send the quotation information including an acceptance of the used article at the trade-in quote and excluding the cash-out quote to the user computer, and

wherein each of the modules in the used article quotation system is ~~executed by an integrated circuit~~ implemented as machine instructions stored on a computer-readable storage medium for execution by a processor.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): A used article quotation method that provides a user computer with a quote for acceptance of a used article from a user, said used article quotation method comprising the steps of:

(a) causing a server computer, which is connected with the user computer in a communicable manner, to receive a quotation request of the used article and quotation requirement information, which is required for quotation of the used article, from the user computer and to set a tentative quote of the used article, based on the quotation requirement information;

(b) causing the server computer to determine whether assessment of the used article is required, according to the tentative quote;

(c) when it is determined in said step (b) that assessment of the used article is not required, causing the server computer to determine a lowest price for the used article to be accepted according to the tentative quote as a firm price for acceptance of the used article without assessment and to set the firm price to a final quote of the used article, and when it is determined in said step (b) that assessment of the used article is required, causing the server computer to set a value range from the lowest to a highest price for the used article to be accepted according to the tentative quote to the final quote of the used article on the condition of assessment of the used article; and

(d) causing the server computer to send quotation information including the final quote, to the user computer,

wherein said step (c), when it is determined in said step (b) that assessment of the used article is not required, causes the server computer to compare the tentative quote with a predetermined value level criterion and to set the settled price of no value range determined according to the tentative quote to the firm price in the case where the tentative quote exceeds the predetermined value level criterion and to set a fixed value regardless of the tentative quote to the firm price including an acceptance of the used article at the firm price in the case where the tentative quote is not greater than the predetermined value level criterion.

Claim 13 (Original): A used article quotation method in accordance with claim 12, wherein said step (b) causes the server computer to determine that assessment of the used article is not required, when the tentative quote is less than a preset assessment requirement judgment value.

Claim 14 (Original): A used article quotation method in accordance with claim 12, wherein said step (c), when it is determined in said step (b) that assessment of the used article is not required, causes the server computer to specify a value level of the tentative quote and to set either of the settled price of no value range determined according to the tentative quote or a fixed value regardless of the tentative quote to the firm price, based on the specified value level.

Claims 15 and 16 (Canceled).

Claim 17 (Original): A used article quotation method in accordance with claim 12, said used article quotation method further comprising the step of:

(e) causing the server computer to determine whether the used article is worth of acceptance, based on the setting of the tentative quote in said step (a),

wherein, when it is determined in said step (e) that the used article is not worth of acceptance, said step (d) causes the server computer to send the quotation information including a notice that the used article is not acceptable, to the user computer.

Claim 18 (Original): A used article quotation method in accordance with claim 12, wherein said step (a) causes the server computer to receive the quotation request of the used article and the quotation requirement information, which is required for quotation of the used article, from the user computer and to set a tentative trade-in quote for the acceptance of the used article that is a trade-in with purchase of a product and a tentative cash-out quote for the acceptance of the used article that is a cash-out without purchase of a product, based on the quotation requirement information,

said step (b) causes the server computer to determine whether assessment of the used article is required individually with regard to the trade-in and the cash-out,

when it is determined in said step (b) that assessment of the used article is not required with regard to each of the trade-in and the cash-out, said step (c) causes the server computer to determine a settled trade-in price of no value range according to the tentative trade-in quote as a firm trade-in price for the trade-in without assessment and set the firm trade-in price to a final trade-in quote of the used article, and to determine a settled cash-out price of no value range according to the tentative cash-out quote as a firm cash-out price for the cash-out without assessment and set the firm cash-out price to a final cash-out quote of the used article, and

said step (d) causes the server computer to send the quotation information including both the final trade-in quote and the final cash-out quote, to the user computer.

Claim 19 (Original): A used article quotation method in accordance with claim 18, said used article quotation method further comprising the step of:

(f) causing the server computer to determine whether the used article is worth of acceptance with regard to at least the cash-out, based on the setting of the tentative cash-out quote in said step (a),

wherein, when it is determined in said step (f) that the used article is not worth of acceptance, said step (d) causes the server computer to send the quotation information including a notice that the used article is not acceptable, to the user computer.

Claim 20 (Currently Amended): A used article quotation system that provides a user computer with a quote for acceptance of a used article from a user, said used article quotation system comprising:

a tentative quote setting module that receives a quotation request of the used article and quotation requirement information, which is required for quotation of the used article, from the user computer and sets a tentative quote of the used article based on the quotation requirement information;

an assessment requirement judgment module that determines whether assessment of the used article is required, according to the tentative quote set by said tentative quote setting module;

a final quote setting module that, when it is determined that assessment of the used article is not required by said assessment requirement judgment module, determines a lowest price according to the tentative quote as a firm price for acceptance of the used article without assessment and sets the firm price to a final quote of the used article, and when it is determined that assessment of the used article is required by said assessment requirement judgment module, sets a value range from the lowest to a highest price according to the tentative quote to the final quote of the used article on the condition of assessment of the used article; and

a quotation information transmission module that sends quotation information including the final quote set by said final quote setting module, to the user computer,

wherein said final quote setting module, when it is determined by said assessment requirement judgment module that assessment of the used article is not required, compares the tentative quote with a predetermined value level criterion and to set the settled price of no value range determined according to the tentative quote to the firm price in the case where the tentative quote exceeds the predetermined value level criterion and to set a fixed value regardless of the tentative quote to the firm price including an acceptance of the used article at the firm price in the case where the tentative quote is not greater than the predetermined value level criterion, and

wherein each of the modules in the used article quotation system is ~~executed by an integrated circuit~~ implemented as machine instructions stored on a computer-readable storage medium for execution by a processor.

Claims 21-30 (Canceled).